

January 21, 1959

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

(39) M-776 Memorandum of Conversation

762.00/1-1659

NND 877418

DATE: January 16, 1959

SUBJECT: German Thinking re Berlin Problem

JAN 26 1959

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Herbert Dittmann, Deputy State Secretary for Political Affairs in the German Foreign Office
Mr. Martin Hillenbrand, Director, GER
Mr. Elwood Williams III, GER

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23

Dr. Dittmann paid a final call on Mr. Hillenbrand before returning to Germany to report to Chancellor Adenauer on his talks with the Secretary. He expressed deepest thanks for his 2-hour meeting with Mr. Dulles describing it as most valuable, particularly because the Secretary had developed his thoughts at some length. Dr. Dittmann said that he and Ambassador Grewe had already sent a long report and that he felt he was now in a position to convey to the Chancellor a clearer idea of American thinking on the desirability of flexibility in German policy.

On this point Dr. Dittmann then asked "Flexibility - but how?". He observed that the newest Russian note was tougher than ever and that the Mikoyan visit had so far shown no door even slightly ajar. Within Germany, Dr. Dittmann felt, the variety of political elements which had been hopeful of some shift in Soviet attitude a few months ago had now been thrown back in confusion. Mr. Hillenbrand noted that the Secretary had said he was not at all surprised to find the Soviet position apparently rigid at this point and had developed at some length his views on Soviet pressure tactics. /See Memorandum of Conversation dated January 14, 1959/. Mr. Hillenbrand pointed out that the Secretary had noted it would be contrary to normal Soviet techniques for them to start compromising at this relatively early stage. The notes so far received gave no prospect of opening the

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way to constructive longer range solutions of the German problem, but the question was whether any of the current maneuvers gave room for Soviet withdrawal under cover of negotiations from their extreme position on Berlin.

Dr. Dittmann then asked whether we were thinking in terms of satellite recognition, disengagement, arms limitations zones or any other specific ideas in our approach to the question of flexibility. Mr. Hillenbrand said that we were examining a number of ideas to see if they had any potential, but it was impossible to know yet which, if any, might finally emerge as the best to follow - perhaps none would finally stand up under scrutiny. In any case, Mr. Hillenbrand felt these questions could not be developed fully until there had been Four-Power consultations perhaps initially when the Study Group had come together. He added that a big point in this connection is the help we hope to get from an exercise of the German imagination. He inquired how soon the German Foreign Office might have their review process completed. Dr. Dittmann said he would be working as hard as he could to push this re-examination in the next two weeks and he estimated that the Foreign Office papers on the subject should be reaching completion by the end of January.

Finally Dr. Dittmann checked with Mr. Hillenbrand regarding one or two points of language in the report he and Ambassador Grewe had sent back to Adenauer regarding their meeting with the Secretary. After checking he expressed himself as satisfied that he and the Ambassador had produced an accurate report.

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